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DD/A Reg. st. 7

**DD/A Registry
File**

20 MAR 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

25X1A FROM : [REDACTED] DDO Equal Employment Opportunity Officer
SUBJECT : Correspondence from [REDACTED] 25X1A
REFERENCE : Your Memorandum of 21 March 1978, DDA 78-1194/1

Thank you for your memorandum of 21 March 1978 on subject correspondence. I now have the full package of correspondence from this very articulate and thoughtful wife of an Agency officer. With this memorandum, I will be sending further correspondence to [REDACTED] 25X1A and believe that my office in the DDO can continue to handle the subject matter on which she is now dealing in her correspondence.

25X1A cc: [REDACTED] IG Staff
SA/DDCI

I 2 IMPDET
CL BY 058227

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700-118-249

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MAR 1978

25X1A

[REDACTED]

25X1A Dear Mrs. [REDACTED]

The correspondence which you have been sending to officials of this organization has all come to my attention in recent weeks, and I wish to address particularly a promise made to you in a letter sent on 1 February 1978, which was that further correspondence on the subject of employment opportunities for spouses would be forthcoming.

I would like to commend you for being both an articulate and thoughtful observer of a highly specialized problem which we face in this organization. Your ideas are constructive and helpful.

25X1A

Last year retiring [REDACTED] Federal Women's Program (FWP) Coordinator undertook review of the problems [REDACTED]

25X1A

25X1A

She contacted some representatives of the affected categories and her group came up with some recommendations in late 1977 that have merit, though they also present some accompanying implementation difficulties.

25X1A

Before the end of 1977, the [REDACTED] Grievance and EEO Officer (GEO) arranged the approval of a panel of specialists both from the affected groups and from [REDACTED] offices involved in the placement and assignment of these categories of employees. Since the beginning of 1978, the new [REDACTED] GEO and the new [REDACTED] FWP Coordinator have consulted at length on this topic and the latter has already nominated participants for the new panel from the affected groups.

25X1A

A delay occurred in connection with a new look at our standing regulation on nepotism, which was viewed by some as insufficiently restrictive. This study goes on but we have decided not to await its outcome before moving ahead with the work of the panel. The panel will probably convene in April using the considerable work and research already done by earlier groups to try to mold recommendations that are practicable to administer and equitable to single employees eager for overseas assignments. We hope to find some wives of employees in this area who can represent the points of view you have taken, and we will turn all your suggestions over to the panel if you have no objection.

25X1A

25X1A

[REDACTED]
Crievance and EEO Officer

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DDA Registry

File O + M - 6

DDA 78-1194/1

21 March 1978

25X1A

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Staff
DDO/EEO Officer
SA/DDCI

FROM:

John F. Blake
Deputy Director for Administration

For the information of the three addressees, I attach
a copy of a letter I recently received from [REDACTED]

25X1A

It is in answer to a letter I sent her on 1 February. It
appears to me that the follow-through necessary, based on

25X1A

[REDACTED] letter, is a matter for the consideration of the
DDO. If this Directorate can be of any assistance, please let
me know.

John F. Blake

John F. Blake

Att:

Undtd ltr to ADD
fr [REDACTED] (DDA 78-1194)

25X1A

Distribution:

Orig -

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1 -

1 - DDA Subj w/Orig of Att

1 - DDA Chrono

1 - JFB Chrono

DDA:JFB:kmg (21 Mar 78)

E2 IMPDET
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C O N F I D E N T I A L

DD/1
78-11941

John F. Blake
 Acting Deputy Director
 c/o Chief, East Asia
 Staff D

Dear Mr. Blake:

25X1A Thank you for your letter of 1 February 1978 in reply to my letter dealing with spouses' problems which was originally sent to [REDACTED] of the IG staff. I appreciate the time and effort obviously expended in preparing such a lengthy response to my missive.

Basically, I feel after reading your letter that my occasional disheartened feeling which prompted my original letter arises from a communications gap between myself as an individual and the organization.

25X1A You noted in your letter that one factor against formation of a spouses' group would the problem of communication. (I can see that [REDACTED] would be paramount and probably insurmountable problems.) Yet I believe it is becoming imperative that difficult or not, some way be found to routinely close the existing communications gap. After reading your letter I was buoyed simply by knowing that our organization is playing such an active, and from my viewpoint, progressive role on the IAC. It would seem to me, then, that one of the problems we spouses feel--the inability to see or effect changes when we sense a problem--could be alleviated by just such knowledge as you imparted in your letter. The root of our feeling of helplessness may not be so much one of no one's being concerned as it is one of our being unaware of activities on our behalf and so we come in time to feel like the victim no one knows or cares about.

If my presumption is correct that a major problem is one of perceptions and not reality, then it is entirely possible that a better perspective by spouses on our problems could be obtained by instituting a routine and periodic form of communications. To wax literary: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned". Not that I believe we are scorned or that we are near fury, but by citing the extreme I hope to make the point that the reverse is true: a spouse attended to is a happy, helpful complement to the employee and thus indirectly to the organization.

Therefore, I offer several suggestions for your consideration:

1) On a one-time basis, from information recently gathered by the visiting Director of Personnel and others, a questionnaire might be developed for answering by spouses on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the lifestyles led by spouses as it is affected the organization. It might cover housing abroad, education abroad, health, employment, transient lifestyle in general, etc. From replies the organization might then have a better feel for what needs doing and can be done. Such a questionnaire would serve the dual and immediate purpose of notifying the recipients of what we sometimes forget: Headquarters cares.

2) Institute a quarterly Office of Personnel newsletter similar to the current monthly State Department Newsletter: it would carry notices of personnel changes, policy and regulations changes, credit union and medical services information, a letters section, and articles on "what we are doing to serve you" (therein would be information such as you wrote in your letter on the IAF and our role therein, as well as such information as has been received in the field on the Congressional tax legislation studies).

3) Within such a newsletter, or by dispatch if a newsletter format is not feasible, a notice of to whom we spouses can write (by pouch) to surface any concerns we might feel. For example, while I am now aware of your office, and know about the IG staff, I still do not really know to whom I could address the more informal and general letter such as this one.

4) Perhaps there would be some spouses in the headquarters area who could and would be willing to serve in a role similar to the newly instituted one at State in its Family Liaison office. This group could serve to receive and channel such letters as this one. It could forward letters for reply/action or seek answers themselves and reply to us directly on matters that don't really concern the IG staff: we would have the same degree of confidentiality without burdening the IG staff with its more immediately important roles.

I could no doubt have made this letter briefer for my whole point can really be summed up thus: I do appreciate your concern and response and wish to suggest that if your concern were more visible and widely known, more spouses' hearts would be lifted.

Thank you, and I look forward to the separate letter concerning employment opportunities noted in your last paragraph.

Sincerely,



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25X1A



Mr. John F. Blake
Acting Deputy Director
c/o Chief, East Asia

25X1A

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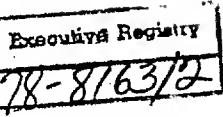
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**CAUTION - DRINK YOUR BEVERAGES
SECURE STORAGE IN FIELD.**

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IG
1 FEB

28 February 1978

25X1A MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]
DDO EEO Officer

25X1A FROM : [REDACTED]
SA/DDCI

25X1A The attached information concerns the letters from Ms.
[REDACTED] to the Inspector General. One response was sent
25X1A by [REDACTED] on 1 February 1978. Her letter promises
continuing correspondence concerning employment opportunities
for spouses overseas. The draft response from you dated
25X1A 27 January 1978 discusses what the DDO plans to do concerning
[REDACTED]

25X1A I inherited this information from [REDACTED] and, after
discussions with [REDACTED] in the Inspector General's Staff, 25X1A
25X1A I feel that the continuing correspondence with [REDACTED] is
best handled by you. [REDACTED] would like to be kept apprised
of your correspondence on this issue but I do not think that I
need to be involved any longer.

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25X1A

Distribution:
Orig - Addressee (w/att)
1 - SA/DDCI
1 - ER

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Exhibit 2
78-8163-1
G

1 FEB 1978

25X1A



This is in response to your letter to [REDACTED] who brought the letter to my attention.

25X1A

25X1C



25X1C

25X1C

treated equitably and with as much uniformity as possible. This is not only [REDACTED] but it is also good management. Most of the overseas agencies operate under the same legislation and there are very few basic differences in the administrative procedures they have adopted. We do, of course, have the authority to make exceptions when that is necessary as a result of circumstances unique to our organization.

Second, I should like to assure you that we do take a very active role in the development of U.S. Government administrative policy as it applies to the overseas agencies. To a large degree this is accomplished through the Interagency Committee on Overseas Allowances and Benefits, but it can also be accomplished through direct action when the approach to the IAC would not be appropriate. For example, the State Department regulations were recently changed to provide that junior personnel could be moved to the next higher housing allowance category when they have a specified number of years of service. This was the direct result of a proposal which we submitted to and pushed through the Interagency Committee. As another example, we are also supporting a proposal to authorize all employees with dependents the maximum 12,000 pounds of combined shipment and storage of household effects, without regard to grade, and 7,500 pounds for all single personnel, again without regard to grade. We anticipate that these changes will be published in the near future. The delay is due to the fact that legislation will be required to provide this benefit to certain of the other agencies, notably the Department of Defense.

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At the present time there are four new proposals before the Interagency Committee for consideration, and all four originated in our organization. Since our representative on the Interagency Committee is also one of five members on the Steering Group of the Committee, we have a significant voice in shaping the overseas administrative policies. It is true that the changes are first announced through the issuance of the State Department regulations, but these regulations are not issued until the Interagency Committee has taken action. So, while the Department obviously has a key role in developing administrative policy, they do not do it without consultation with the other members of the overseas community.

We usually follow the policies approved for all other agencies but there are circumstances under which we modify those policies to meet our own requirements. The need for this has been



25X1C

Your letter attached a copy of an article from the Department's "Newsletter," dated May 1977. There were two subsequent issues of the "Newsletter" which also addressed the proposals submitted by the spouses group. I assume that you have the subsequent issues available to you and I won't try to summarize them for you. However, I should like for you to be aware that here also we are in close contact with the Department. They are developing an orientation course for spouses and we will contribute to it. Their material will be available to us and our Office of Training will provide a similar course for our

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spouses who cannot attend the State course. You should also be aware that when the State spouses speak of "employment opportunities" they are not speaking of employment opportunities within the Department or other government agencies, which was our initial interpretation. Rather, they seem to be saying that wives of diplomatic personnel should be permitted to work in the private sector abroad and maintain their diplomatic status at the same time. This is a question which is based on the law of the host country and there is probably nothing the Department will be able to do about it, although they will approach it on a country by country basis. As for certain other issues raised by the State spouses, such as payment for babysitter fees during receptions, this would require legislation and at this point I would hesitate to speculate about the probability of such legislation being enacted.

With respect to your suggestion concerning the establishment of a "spouses group" within the Organization, we are certainly anxious to learn what the spouses of our employees feel about key issues. In fact, since your letter was written, the Director of Personnel and another senior administrative officer have visited several stations and met with spouses as well as employees. Senior administrative officers make these visits periodically to stay aware of the problems which concern our employees and dependents overseas. In addition, the Inspector General reports on issues and problems which are of concern to employees. We believe these personal contacts keep us up-to-date on key issues yet avoid the [redacted] communication 25X1C and coordination problems that a formal "spouses group" would pose. In addition, we get a better understanding of the stations and bases and how the same problems and solutions impact differently at the various locations.

Thank you for your concern. We are always prepared to discuss problems with any of our employees or their spouses. We hope we have satisfactorily answered the questions raised in your first letter; the second one on employment opportunities for spouses will be the subject of separate correspondence.

Sincerely yours,

[redacted]
25X1A

John F. Blake
Acting Deputy Director

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